

BILL BRIGHT JOINS HANDS WITH FALSE GOSPELS

Updated May 21, 2003 (first published October 8, 2000) (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org; for instructions about subscribing and unsubscribing or changing addresses, see the information paragraph at the end of the article)-

Bill Bright, head of Campus Crusade for Christ, joined hands with Catholic priests, Jewish rabbis, liberal Protestant clergymen, Muslim leaders, and other false gospelers in a “Summit of Faith” in Tallahassee, Florida, on December 7. The two-hour event was coordinated by Jim Towey, a Catholic who is organizing Awakening 2000, a program “promising spiritual renewal in Florida.” Towey is a former volunteer for Mother Teresa. More than 50 religious leaders attended the “Summit of Faith.”

Connected with the event was an interfaith prayer service at the First Baptist Church in Tallahassee. I called the church on December 17 and the secretary confirmed to me that they did host the interfaith prayer service. She also confirmed that First Baptist is associated with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Bill Bright was one of the speakers at the event. He said, “We must turn back to the God of our fathers. There is no one else who can help us.” He is right, but he confuses the truth by his unscriptural ecumenical adventures and his refusal to expose false gospels. According to the Bible, there are false gods, false gospels, false christs, and false spirits. Instead of joining hands with those who preach false gospels and worship false gods, evangelical leaders should boldly lift their voices against them and separate from them so the world will know the difference between truth and error.

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you” (2 Corinthians 6:14-17).

BILL BRIGHT AND THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Fellowship with false gospels is nothing new for Bill Bright. As early as 1969, Bright said, “We do not attack the Roman Church. We believe God is doing a mighty work in it and will no doubt use millions of Roman Catholics to help evangelize the world” (The Post & Times Star, Cincinnati, Ohio, Aug. 30, 1969).

At Billy Graham’s Amsterdam ‘86 conference, Bright said, “There was a day when Protestants and Roman Catholics would not have much to do with one another. But today the Spirit of God is doing such a great work in both the Roman Catholic and Protestant fellowships and communions that I feel very much at home wherever Jesus Christ is honored” (Foundation, Jul.-Aug. 1986).

We would ask Mr. Bright how it is possible that Roman Catholics honor Jesus Christ when they deny the sufficiency of His atonement and of the Holy Scriptures, and when they ignore His commands about such things as adding human traditions to the Word of God and calling religious leaders “father,” and when they exalt Mary to the position of Advocate and Mediatrix (Vatican Council II, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, chap. 8, II, 62, pp. 382-383)?

Campus Crusade representative Dr. Boyce Van Osdel was the pastor of Oakland First Baptist Church in Oakland, California. On August 16, 1969, Van Osdel invited Catholic Monsignor John S. Cummins to speak in his Baptist pulpit on the subject "Unity's Missing Dimension." Five months later, Van Osdel led his congregation down the street in formal procession to join a Catholic Mass at St. Francis De Sales Cathedral. Dr. Van Osdel said, "What seemed impossible five years ago will now become a milestone of our ecumenical growth" (The Oakland Tribune, January 17, 1970).

By the 1970s Campus Crusade had several Catholics on staff (James Hefley, *A Prejudiced Protestant Takes a New Look at the Catholic Church*, 1971, p. 122). Hefley testifies: "Marti and I met one of the Catholic staffers at Crusade headquarters in Arrowhead Springs." In an interview with *Wittenburg Door*, June-July 1978, Richard Quebedeaux noted, "In Ireland, Campus Crusade is registered as a religious order. ... And they work entirely within the Catholic church there with Catholics because there is nobody else to work with. Campus Crusade has a whole category of ministries that they term experimental. They will tell you about them if you ask specifically, but they will not volunteer because they are afraid of their conservative supporters who, if they knew what they were doing in Ireland with Catholics, for instance, would withdraw their money in a second."

As the decades have passed and the churches have weakened, these Evangelical organizations have been able to be increasingly open about their association with Roman Catholicism.

Each year since at least 1980, Bill Bright has been an organizer and sponsor of the "Washington for Jesus" celebrations, which have included Catholic priests, Seventh-day Adventists, those who deny the Trinity (the United Pentecostal Church), and other unscriptural ecumenists. The first "Washington for Jesus" convention in April 1980, featured Modernist Robert Schuller; Charismatics Jim Bakker, Demos Shakarian and Pat Robertson; as well as Catholic priests John Bertolucci, John Randall, and Michael Scanlon.

Bill Bright has been one of the leading organizers of ecumenical crusades such as Key '73 and has been involved in the decisions to invite Catholic participation in these conferences. Bright's "Here's Life America" crusade in 1976 had Catholic participation. In the Dec. 12, 1986, issue of *Christianity Today*, Bill Bright endorsed *The Mission*, a film about Catholic missionaries. Bright calls the movie "a triumphal film with a life-changing message which will enrich your life for years to come." He fails to warn the viewers that the Catholics depicted in the movie preached a false sacramental gospel that led people to eternal Hell.

Bright participated in the publication of a series of books on evangelism co-sponsored by Tyndale House and the Paulist National Catholic Evangelization Association. The first book in the series, *What Christians Can Learn from One Another About Evangelizing Adults*, included articles by Bill Bright, Pope John Paul II, Archbishop Joseph Bernardin, and others.

Bill Bright was one of the signers of the unscriptural "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium" (ECT) statement in March 1994. Some asked Bright to recant his position on ECT but he refused, saying, "There are tens of millions of true believers among the Catholics...." *Calvary Contender* editor Jerry Huffman wisely noted that "true believers will separate from the false Roman Catholic religion." In the statement distributed by Campus Crusade for Christ in defense of Bright's signing of ECT he said: "In my world travels of many years, I have discovered that there are both believers and nonbelievers in Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox communities. I have sought to build bridges of love with all true believers in all communions." The Bible requires that God's people mark and avoid those who teach contrary to the doctrine taught by the Apostles (Romans 16:17), but today's popular Evangelical leaders ignore this command and fellowship with practically anyone who names the name of Christ, regardless of what doctrine or gospel they hold.

In November 1997, Bill Bright signed the even more deceptive “Evangelicals and Catholics II” document, which was grossly misnamed “The Gift of Salvation.” We review this document in Part XI of our book *Evangelicals and Rome*.

On October 7, 1995, Bill Bright was one of the Protestant leaders who joined an interfaith delegation that met with Pope John Paul II during his trip to the United States. Other members of the delegation included Chuck Colson, Pat Robertson, National Association of Evangelicals president Don Argue, and National Council of Churches general secretary Joan Campbell. Pat Robertson said of the meeting, “There was a real sense of harmony. We all admire the Holy Father tremendously. We all want to build bridges with the Catholic Church.” Bright and Robertson also attended the papal Mass that evening.

One discerning writer described the awful compromise involved with such an action:

“The Mass is still a terrible ritual. It shouts out by Romish word and Romish sacrament that Christ's death on the cross was not enough to save mankind. It was a partial redemption which must be supplemented by the other Romish sacraments, penance, purgatory, priestly absolution, and good works. Further, the whole Romish system of salvation invests its priests with the superhuman power, which no one else has, to transubstantiate bread and wine into the actual body and blood of Christ. ... Biblically speaking, in Roman Catholicism, we find a fake priesthood performing a fake ritual producing a fake sacrament with the jingling of bells and the adoration of the faithful gullible producing no saving faith and receiving no true forgiveness of sins. The whole system requires you to use a mediator to approach the one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus” (Kurt Linde, “Some Thoughts on the Papacy and the Evangelization of Roman Catholics,” *Christian News*, October 23, 1995, p. 7).

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